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Account Created in 1984 - Ethics in Modern Technology

Nowadays, it is not uncommon for most people to rely on smart devices and services to go about many aspects of their daily life. From Facebook and Twitter to interact with friends and family, to Amazon and Grubhub to shop on the go. Little does the common person think about their privacy with such popular and widespread utilities, as surely there could be no danger with names so acclaimed. Yet, it is exactly these giant corporations who are breaking every sensible morale boundary in order to make a profit. As technology continues to improve at a rapid pace, the capacity for business to leech aspects of the consumer’s daily life for revenue skyrockets at an equally jarring pace until practically no privacy remains for the user. The attitudes that big corporations are showing towards privacy are blatantly anti-consumer and breach every single spoken and unspoken agreement that mankind as a whole has to treat one another with respect and kindness, such as the Bible shows us.

Sadly, one doesn’t have to look very far in order to see the widespread and rapid decay of privacy across popular media. Constellation Research described Google Hangout’s ‘smart suggestion’ AI as “well beyond ‘creepy,’” owing to the fact that it constantly spies on users waiting to make “helpful suggestions” (Constellation Research). Facebook has been underhandedly using developing countries in order to manipulate their own like system, according to Veritasium. Really, in this day and age, it would be much harder to find a large company who has not tampered with the consumer’s privacy than one who has.

And yet, despite how common it is for these tech giants to take advantage of the average user, the consumer is almost never aware of it. Adrienne Lafrance put it well in Michel Martin’s interview, stating that “unless you've read the terms of service extensively . . . you're not necessarily going to understand that there's sort of this puppet-master on the other side affecting what you see” (Martin). It is purely unethical that it has become a completely standard business practice for personal information to be bought and sold, for users to become uninformed test subjects, or for users to be blatantly tricked into bad decisions. User confidentiality is incredibly important, being, as Michael C. Loui notes in “Ethics and Professional Responsibility in computing,” one of the basic tenants that any self-respecting creator should follow, regardless how large they get (Loui 9). In Philippians 2:3, it is stated to “[d]o nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit[,] rather, in humility[,] value others above yoursel[f]” (NIV).The actions of these giants are clearly done in pure self-interest, as they value profit more than the mutual respect of their users.

The current social and technological landscape is rife with opportunities for abuse and misuse, and creators and tech giants have been freely doing so for many years. A flagrant disregard for basic morale sensibility and human decency have led to these companies freely abusing their station, as can be seen with such examples as Facebook and Google. They even go against the teachings in the bible, clearly seeking only personal gain with no regard for the disservice they are doing to their fellow man. It is a shameful state of affairs that will most likely only get worse as time goes on, as the more power these giants get, the more corrupt they become. It is up to the small-time programmers and workers to uphold their own justice.

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